



JANUARY 2022 | Pictured left to right: Carlie Jahner, Kyra Petersen & Kirsten Friedt at ABLE employee COVID testing in the T-Rex Mall.

## REFLECTIONS OF A NEW YEAR

Dear ABLE Readers,

This newsletter is filled with reflections typical of a New Year. I hope you enjoy the article about Joe's spirit living on in his home. It is those moments that remind us that relationships are at the heart of what we do.

We are saddened and yet overjoyed for Carolynne Jones who is announcing her retirement. How do you replace the knowledge and wisdom of 40 years of lived experiences? Her legacy will live on through all she's touched.

We look back at the past 2 years of COVID impact. Yes, COVID continues but we are finding new tools and methods of safety.

We are grateful for the accomplishments ABLE, Inc. has made. When Lutheran Social Services declared bankruptcy, ABLE, Inc. stepped up and purchased The Landing in Bowman. We needed to secure housing for people's futures. Along with that action, we made significant improvements to the T-Rex Plaza.

We look forward to sharing laughter, celebrations, and joy in 2022 and having many more accomplishments.

-Mary Anderson, Executive Director



Mary Anderson

## Caring for our Communities since 1945



Southwestern District Health Unit



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

With the motto, "Prevent. Promote. Protect." the Southwest District Health Unit provides services to 8 counties in southwestern North Dakota. These services include behavioral health, environmental health, emergency preparedness, tobacco and alcohol prevention, safe food and lodging, as well as maintaining and improving the health status of our entire region.

During these unprecedented times of the pandemic, Sherry Adams and her team have been a true source of wisdom and beacon of strength for ABLE, Inc. They have supported us in many ways such as understanding healthcare regulations, performing routine COVID-19 testing for our agency, and assisting us with supplies. ABLE, Inc. is grateful for their dedication to their mission and all that they continue to do to keep our communities healthy and safe.



## DECADES

COME TAKE A TRIP THROUGH TIME AT THE T-REX MALL  
OPEN 10AM-5PM MON-FRI, 10AM-3PM SAT

# A Joyful Christmas

THERE WAS SO MUCH TO BE GRATEFUL FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Amy Belile (above) and Greg Wock (right) enjoying some decorating.



Pictured left: Hoppy Vogel showing off his new puzzle from friend, Art Johnson.



Pictured right: Santa visited Hettinger! Left to right: Carrie Beck, Santa's helper, Zach Lohnes, Santa & Dallas Alexenko. Upper right: Carrie Beck enjoying a present.

## Our Angels

**D** DICKINSON<sup>®</sup>  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
St. Patrick's Church

We participated in the Angel Tree program with both St. Patrick's Church and Dickinson State University hosting a tree for us. People we support were able to submit their names along with specific needs or items they desired this Christmas and WOW our angels delivered. The gifts filled 4 vehicles and took a team of people to unload, sort and deliver. The generosity shown was awe-inspiring. We are grateful to all who gave with such thoughtfulness in order for people we support to have presents under their Christmas trees. We also would like to thank: Rosie Jahner from ABLE, Inc. who coordinated this massive effort, all who assisted in loading and delivery, as well as leadership and DSPs who helped submit the lists and write thank you notes. It made a big impact!





Left to right: Kay Fletcher and Kim Fretheim show off their fun side for the sale.

The Repeat Outlet in Bowman celebrated National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day on December 17 by taking part in the Sweateristic shopping night sponsored by the Bowman Chamber of Commerce. Kay Fletcher and Kim Fretheim welcomed shoppers donning their Ugly Christmas Sweaters and finishing their holiday shopping.

Kay Fletcher welcomes shopper, Leah King, browsing handmade items in the store.

## A NEW HOME FOR AWHILE -- NEW FRIENDS FOREVER

Abra has been an exceptional employee with the ABLE, Inc. Work Crew, and she values hard work. When struggling to complete her work duties due to chronic knee pain, Abra, after months of physical therapy, went the next step; knee surgery replacement on November 1, 2021.

Initially her rehabilitation was to happen at one of the nursing homes in Dickinson, but there was concern of Abra not being around her family and friends, at the nursing home, due to COVID.



A new invitation arrived for Abra to think about: come and live on 4th Avenue at one of our ICF/IID homes. She had mixed emotions with it being a new place and new staff. Abra was already feeling the emptiness of having to be away from her cat, Cuddles. But, in the end, Abra called the 4th Avenue home her home for nearly 2 months.

Abra had 24-hour care to assist in all her needs. She leaned on staff for the first few weeks as she struggled with pain and needed support to complete daily physical therapy. But once Abra felt better and became stronger, she became a part of the home: she enjoyed being around others for TV, sharing meals, cooking, playing board games, and sharing laughter. Oh, how Abra loves to laugh, tease, and have a good time. Those who live at there, along with the staff, were blessed.

4th was home for a few months for Abra. It was exactly what she needed! It was exactly what the home needed too!

Thank you to the team at 4th for making this a successful rehabilitation journey. Abra is back at her apartment and back at work.

Abra is again living her life!



## A Reflection: Joe Zent's Spirit Living On

By Eileen Berger

The day after Thanksgiving, the **Christmas** décor went up to the 1st floor of 4th Avenue. I was delighted that staff were eager to begin.

When I returned, a day or two later, everyone's trees were put up in their bedrooms, the large Christmas tree had ornaments and lights, the common area was decorated with holiday wall hangings and fixtures, and then I saw: **The POLE**.

**This is a little story, filled with the magical spirit of Joe Zent (who passed away August 9, 2021). He LOVED Christmas: singing, presents, Santa, and wishing everyone a 'Merry Christmas'.**

**The Pole.** You see, there are 2 poles in the hallway of the home (for the structure of the building), but only **ONE** was decorated with ribbon, only **ONE** had ornaments on it, only **ONE** had the figure of a **Santa** at the base of the pole, sitting on the floor. And the pole was NOT covered with ribbon to the bottom, to meet the floor. The pole was not covered to hide the scraped paint that is missing on it.

This pole has always been referred to as '**Joe's Pole**' because he always took that corner too sharp while using his wheelchair; thus the paint was rubbed off from the base of it.

-The pole was repainted after remodeling from a fire.

-And it was repainted, again, several weeks later because Joe had already left his mark.

-After the 2nd painting, we left it as it was: it was '**Joe's Pole**'.



When Joe passed away, I touch up painted his bedroom. I knew of the pole, but I couldn't paint it. I wanted, I needed, to see that pole as it was: with no paint on the bottom; remembering Joe, pedaling his feet in the wheelchair as he came and went from his bedroom to the larger living area. I needed to glance at that pole each time I walked the hall.

This is magical, but it is even more so because it was not a veteran staff who knew of 'Joe's Pole'. It was a traveling CNA who decorated that pole, who was not working at 4th when Joe lived there.

Why was only **one pole** decorated? Why did the ribbon not go to the base of the pole to cover the paint that was missing? And why put **Santa by the pole**? Why? **Why?**

So many of us have been touched. So many of us are filled with Joe's presence. Joe loved Christmas. Joe loved Santa.

**The Spirit of Christmas** lives on . . .  
Merry Christmas, Joe!!! We love you!!!

# A Moment of Reflection

withCarolynne Jones, Director of Satellite Services



I've been so fortunate in my life to know at an early age what I wanted for my future. I was the kind of kid who didn't join in with others when they made fun of those who were different. I was the young lifeguard parents requested to teach their child with down syndrome or other differences how to swim. While still in college I was hired to start the 2nd Story Social Club in Minot to provide a gathering spot where people with varying abilities could get together on their terms. When my husband, Steve, and I lived in the Flathead Lake area in Montana, I worked for the Salish Kootenai Tribe supporting people in our recycling, hydroponic greenhouse, and frame shop departments. When a friend told me about a group of Bowman people (Arc, Little Missouri, Inc.) who were looking for someone to start an adult day program, we jumped at the chance to return to North Dakota. And they hired me!! 😊 That was January 18, 1982. Oof, am I really that old...ha. But aren't I so glad to have lived here all these years.

In 1984, the two Arc's in Dickinson and Bowman combined forces to start a new agency (ABLE, Inc.) that would also develop a day/residential program in Hettinger. We became official October 1, 1984 and have never looked back. My job has been to oversee all of our services in Bowman and Hettinger as Director of Satellite Services. All of you will have the continuing benefit of our amazing team doing what they do best... making daily life for people even better.

This past summer Steve sold his Waterhole Bar in Rhame after almost 39 years of ownership. Quite a run we've both had. Mid-February (also my retirement date) we'll head to Arizona to watch his beloved Dodgers spring train and then back to Mayo where he's been doctoring for Primary Myelofibrosis. Life can be scary and at the same time ever so good. I wish all of you the best of the best and thank you for sticking with me all these years. -Carolynne

## Christmas Bingo Party

The HOPE self-advocacy group met in December and had a great time playing bingo together. Shirley Lund won the very soft Grand Prize blanket. Congrats Shirley! Everyone won a prize and the evening was full of laughter!

One of the goals of the HOPE group was to increase attendance to their meetings. They applied for a \$500 DD Council grant last fall to help purchase supplies for meeting events and they received the grant! This has been very beneficial and since October, they have had 13 new people attend a monthly meeting. The group not only knows how to have fun, but they also discuss community events, challenges they are facing, ABLE news and initiatives, and they learn new ways to advocate for themselves and each other. The meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of each month and anyone with a disability is welcome to join.

The February meeting will be on TEAMS due to increased COVID numbers so please sign up on the ABLE Outlook calendar or call the main office if you're interested in attending and we will make sure that you get the link to join. We are hoping to get together again and have BINGO in March or April!



Shirley Lund with the grand prize blanket.



Pictures from left to right: Abra Safratowich smiling for the camera with Carol Carter. Ray Rykowski, Sarah Steiner, Curtis Reiter, & Stacy Doe are concentrating hard, hoping to win. Julia Anderson & Amy Belile waiting for the next number.



TAKE A TRIP THROUGH TIME AT

# Decades

LOCATED IN THE T-REX PLAZA

OPEN 10AM-5PM MON-FRI  
10AM-3PM SATURDAY



*dance on over to*  
**ABLE KID THRIFT**

Clothing sizes 0 to 5T, cribs, high chairs,  
& more for your small children.

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MON-FRI 10AM-5PM, SAT 10AM-3PM



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